

**CONFERENCE OF THE EIGHTEEN-NATION COMMITTEE
ON DISARMAMENT**

ENDC/PV.249
17 March 1966
ENGLISH

FINAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWO HUNDRED AND FORTY-NINTH MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 17 March 1966, at 10.00 a.m.

Chairman:

Mr. M. BLUSZTAJN

(Poland)

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PRESENT AT THE TABLE

Brazil:

Mr. A. CORREA de LAGO
Mr. G. de CARVALHO SILOS
Mr. D. SILVEIRA da MCTA

Bulgaria:

Mr. C. LUKANOV
Mr. B. KONSTANTINOV
Mr. D. POPOV
Mr. T. DAMIANOV

Burma:

U MAUNG MAUNG GYI

Canada:

Mr. E. L. M. BURNS
Mr. S. F. RAE
Mr. C. J. MARSHALL
Mr. P. D. LEE

Czechoslovakia:

Mr. Z. CERNIK
Mr. V. VAJNAR
Mr. R. KLEIN

Ethiopia:

Mr. A. ZELLEKE
Mr. B. ASSFAW

India:

Mr. V. C. TRIVEDI
Mr. K. P. LUKOSE
Mr. K. P. JAIN
Mr. S. V. PURUSHOTTAM

Italy:

Mr. F. CAVALLETTI
Mr. G. P. TOZZOLI
Mr. S. AVETTA
Mr. F. SORO

Mexico:

Mr. A. GOMEZ ROBLEDO
Mr. M. TELLO MACIAS

Nigeria:

Mr. G. O. LIJEWERE
Mr. O. O. ADESOLA

PRESENT AT THE TABLE (cont'd)

Poland:

Mr. M. BLUSZTAJN
 Mr. E. STANIEWSKI
 Mr. A. SKOWRONSKI
 Mrs. H. SKOWRONSKA

Romania:

Mr. V. DUMITRESCU
 Mr. C. UNGUREANU
 Mr. A. COROIANU

Sweden:

Mr. P. HAMMARSKJOLD
 Mr. I. VIRGIN
 Mr. R. BOMAN

Union of Soviet Socialist
Republics:

Mr. S. K. TSARAPKIN
 Mr. O. A. GRINEVSKY
 Mr. S. A. BOGOMOLOV
 Mr. A. A. OZADOVSKY

United Arab Republic:

Mr. H. KHALLAF
 Mr. A. OSMAN
 Mr. M. KASSEM
 Mr. M. SHAKER

United Kingdom:

Lord CHALFONT
 Sir Harold BEELEY
 Miss E. J. M. RICHARDSON
 Mr. P. W. J. BUXTON

United States of America:

Mr. A. S. FISHER
 Mr. C. H. TIMBERLAKE
 Mr. L. D. WEILER
 Mr. D. S. MACDONALD

Special Representative of the
Secretary-General:

Mr. D. PROTITCH

Deputy Special Representative
of the Secretary-General:

Mr. W. EPSTEIN

The CHAIRMAN (Poland): I declare open the two hundred and forty-ninth plenary meeting of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament.

I should like to announce that we have received an invitation from the Romanian delegation to take part in the ceremony in commemoration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the death of the distinguished Romanian statesman and diplomat, Nicholas Titulescu.

Mr. BURNS (Canada): I should like to begin my statement this morning by offering congratulations to the United States on the flight which took place yesterday. It represents yet another step forward in the art and science of the exploration of the cosmos. At the same time I should like to congratulate the Soviet Union on the completion of its experimental flight at a very high altitude, and perhaps I should also congratulate the two Soviet dogs which came back safely.

Resolution 2031 (XX) of the United Nations General Assembly (ENDC/161) calls on this Committee to try to make progress on a treaty on general and complete disarmament. We are all in agreement on the goal we are aiming at: it is set out in the Joint Statement of Agreed Principles for Disarmament Negotiations endorsed by the General Assembly in resolution 1722 (XVI) (ENDC/5). Since 1959 four resolutions have been adopted urging us to get on with the task and stressing its importance. What has been accomplished? There has been some convergence or coming together of the views of the East and the West, but very little has been achieved in the light of the gap separating them.

What is the area in which it has been most difficult to reconcile the positions of the two super-Powers and their allies? As all representatives here know, that area relates to reducing and finally eliminating nuclear weapon vehicles in the possession of the nuclear Powers.

Let me give a short history of the various positions taken by the USSR on this question in the course of the negotiations of the Ten-Nation Disarmament Committee and the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament. In March 1960, when the Soviet Union first presented its proposals for general and complete disarmament, the idea was that nuclear weapon vehicles -- rockets and long-range bombers -- would not be

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destroyed until the last stage of disarmament (TNCD/PV.2, p.18). Then in June 1960, before the Ten-Nation Disarmament Committee broke up, the Soviet Union made a big shift in position and proposed that all nuclear weapon vehicles should be destroyed in the first stage of disarmament (TNCD/PV.33, p.10). When the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament began its meetings, in March 1962, the position of the Soviet Union as set out in its draft treaty (ENDC/2) was the same: all nuclear weapon vehicles were to be destroyed in stage I.

The position of the Western Powers, set out in the United States Outline of Basic Provisions of a Treaty on General and Complete Disarmament in a Peaceful World (ENDC/30 and Corr.1 and Add. 1, 2, 3) was -- and remains today -- that nuclear weapon vehicles should be eliminated by roughly one-third in each stage of general and complete disarmament. Of course, the United States has also proposed, as preliminary measures, the destruction of certain nuclear weapon vehicles and the cessation of their production and development. I shall say more about those proposals later in my statement.

The representatives of the Western nations here during the 1962 session argued against the Soviet Union concept of destroying all nuclear weapon vehicles in the first stage as being neither practicable nor in accordance with the Agreed Principles. Then, at the United Nations General Assembly in the autumn of 1962, Mr. Gromyko, the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union, proposed a modification in the Soviet position. That modification was that an exception to the destruction of all nuclear weapon vehicles in the first stage should be made, and that the Soviet Union and the United States should retain a certain number of intercontinental ballistic missiles on their own territories until the end of stage II (A/PV.1127, para.76). At the series of meetings of our Committee which followed, the Soviet representatives did not give any adequate explanation of exactly how the Gromyko proposals would work and how they would be consistent with the agreed principles of balance and effective verification. In short, they failed to convince the Western delegations that the Gromyko "umbrella" would make any real difference in the former position of the Soviet Union, which was unacceptable.

Then, in the United Nations General Assembly in the autumn of 1963, Mr. Gromyko announced (A/PV.1208, para.137) another modification, which was that the minimum number of intercontinental ballistic missiles would be retained by the United States and the Soviet Union until the end of stage III. This provision,

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it was suggested by the USSR spokesman, would be a protection against any illegal retention of nuclear weapon vehicles or nuclear weapons by any parties to the treaty, and against any other threat of nuclear war.

During our 1964 sessions we argued at length about the so-called Gromyko "umbrella". The substantive questions concerning these proposals got mixed up with the suggestion, made by Mr. Zorin in June, that a working group should be set up to study them (ENDC/PV.188, p.17; PV.190, p.33). This suggestion, while at first welcomed, failed to be accepted because the delegation of the Soviet Union insisted that the working group could examine only the Gromyko proposal and could not at the same time look into the merits of the reduction system favoured by the United States and its allies.

I must confess that the Canadian delegation was somewhat confused by what the representative of the Soviet Union said on 8 March 1966. He repeated a portion of Chairman Kosygin's message to this Conference dated 1 February 1966 (ENDC/167) and then said -- and I give his remarks in a somewhat shortened form -- that in order to put an end to the danger of nuclear war and the armaments race, the Soviet Government proposes that the nuclear Powers "should consider the question" (ENDC/PV.246, p.27) of immediately carrying out the destruction, under appropriate international control, of all nuclear weapon vehicles and all stocks of nuclear weapons, and of prohibiting their further production.

Taking this proposal in the context of Chairman Kosygin's message as a whole, one would think it was being proposed as a measure preliminary to general and complete disarmament. However, I find it rather difficult to believe that that was really the intention, in view of the statement by the representative of the Soviet Union on 15 March 1966 (ENDC/PV.248, pp.12 et seq). We understand from that statement that the USSR proposals for general and complete disarmament are still as set out in the revision of its draft treaty published in document DC/213/Add.1 of 28 April 1965.

The representative of the Soviet Union proposed on 15 March (ENDC/PV.248, p.25) that the Committee discuss the Gromyko "umbrella" idea further; and I am hoping that he will not place on such a discussion the kind of restrictions which prevented a discussion during our sessions in 1964. But in his discourse he reiterated the view that nuclear disarmament must be almost complete in the first stage, to eliminate the danger of a nuclear war. The Western representatives here have

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have argued during the sessions for two whole years that the proposal of the Soviet Union to destroy all nuclear weapon vehicles in the first stage of disarmament is not realistic in the world of today. From the modifications introduced by Mr. Gromyko, we thought these arguments had been accepted -- at least to some degree. I think that the position of the Soviet Union in March 1960, that the most powerful means of delivery of nuclear weapons should be the last armaments to be destroyed, was more in accordance with realities than that they should be the first to be destroyed; though, of course, total destruction of nuclear weapon vehicles to be accomplished either in the first stage or in the last stage is not, in the view of my delegation, the proper solution.

I would ask the representative of the Soviet Union if he really believes that there is any possibility, in the state of the world today, of the nuclear Powers agreeing to destroy practically all their nuclear weapon vehicles in eighteen months. It is the general opinion of specialists in international relations that the existence of these potentially devastating weapons is the most effective deterrent to any large-scale war. It would seem that we must continue to rely on this deterrent to large-scale war until there is a great improvement in the present state of international political relations and we can really achieve the objectives of general and complete disarmament.

If there is one thing we should have learnt in our long sessions during the years, it is that there is great suspicion and fear between the East European socialist nations and the Western democracies. This being a fact, it is almost impossible to believe that until the international atmosphere is much better either West or East will give up the ultimate means which it has at its disposal for deterring war. Not only must the political questions which are currently the cause of conflicts all over the world be settled, but some means must be found -- and it is to be hoped it would be found through an improvement in the effectiveness of the United Nations -- to ensure that, when a change in social and political organization is plainly necessary in any part of the world, it can be effected peacefully without international or civil war. Only when we have made much more progress in organizing a peaceful world will it be possible to move to the last stage of disarmament and finally eliminate the terrific weapons which now preserve what is admittedly a perilous and precarious peace.

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Another fact, within the knowledge of everyone here, invalidates the contention of the USSR that elimination of all nuclear weapon vehicles in stage I would free the world from the danger of nuclear war. Suppose that by some magic we were able to agree tomorrow to the USSR proposal, and destroy all nuclear weapons and nuclear weapon vehicles within eighteen months. There would then exist no really effective means of preventing war between the great Powers to take the place of the present nuclear deterrent. Seventy per cent of the existing conventional forces and armaments would be left, and if war broke out between the great Powers, nuclear weapons could be reconstituted within a very short time. The know-how exists, the facilities would be there, and the nuclear explosive would be there. The rockets which would be kept for space exploration and other scientific research, and the large long-distance civilian aircraft, could be quickly adapted as carriers of nuclear weapons. There would therefore be no final guarantee that nuclear war would be eliminated even if all existing nuclear weapons and vehicles were destroyed. And indeed how, under the Soviet Union proposals, would any nation be sure that all of them had been destroyed?

The arguments which I have offered against the Soviet concept that the way to move towards general and complete disarmament is to destroy all stocks of nuclear weapons and their vehicles within two years are not arguments against the agreed principle that general and complete disarmament entails the final elimination of nuclear weapons and their vehicles. The questions in dispute, the questions we have to try to settle here, are: Exactly how is this to be done, what should be the correlation with other measures of disarmament, what should be the time-scale, how is disarmament to be related to other political measures to attain the peaceful world in which general and complete disarmament can finally become a reality? I suggest that the immediate question as regards general and complete disarmament is: How do we begin? How, in particular, do we begin to deal with the obviously dangerous inflation of stocks of nuclear weapons and their vehicles? I shall now try to explain how, in the view of the Canadian delegation, this process can best be undertaken.

Put rather simply, this is our view. If it is not possible to achieve nuclear disarmament in one big leap, as the Soviet Union seems to be suggesting, then we

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should move towards it in a series of small steps. We had indeed hoped that this had become the opinion also of the authorities of the Soviet Union when we studied Mr. Gromyko's statement (A/PV.1335) in the general debate in the United Nations General Assembly last autumn, for in this statement there was far more stress on the need to agree on preliminary measures than the usual ritual insistence that what was needed was immediate agreement on general and complete disarmament on the lines proposed by the Soviet Union.

If we cannot accept what we understood the representative of the Soviet Union to have put forward as the USSR proposal to deal with nuclear weapons and their vehicles, what can be done instead? The representatives of the Soviet Union here have rejected the United States concept of approximately equal percentage reductions in each of the three stages, on the stated grounds that, even if there were a 30 per cent reduction in nuclear weapon vehicles, this would still leave enough of them for a tremendously destructive war. Other reasons why the Soviet Union may have rejected the United States plan have been suggested by commentators on disarmament and related topics in international affairs. These other reasons are that, it being generally conceded that the United States has a large numerical superiority in intercontinental ballistic missiles, a percentage reduction through the several stages of disarmament would maintain this relative advantage for the United States, and the Soviet Union would consider this to be unacceptable. The Soviet Union might even think that it could be put in a less advantageous position if, through the process of verification, other countries got to know precisely the locations of its intercontinental ballistic missiles and other important weaponry.

What remains to be done, or what possibilities remain? As we know, there is before this Committee the proposal of the United States to halt the production of fissionable material for war purposes and, the newer accompaniment to this proposal, to destroy a large number of nuclear weapons and use the explosive contents for peaceful purposes (ENDC/PV.246, pp. 33 et seq.) There is also the proposal for balanced destruction of certain nuclear-bomb carrying aircraft (ENDC/PV.199 pp.14 et seq.), which the representative of the Soviet Union treated with such contumely at our meeting on 8 March (ENDC/PV.246, p.29). His criticism of the proposal overlooked the fact that the United States negotiators had said that they were ready

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to discuss the destruction of other types of nuclear weapon vehicles if the Soviet Union desired to do so. So far as the Canadian delegation knows, the Soviet Union has made no response to this practical suggestion.

The representative of the Soviet Union also made a good deal of the fact that the majority of the United States B-47 bombers, which were proposed for the mutual bomber "bonfire" at that time, have since been taken out of service unilaterally; but, as was pointed out by the representative of the United States at our last meeting (ENDC/PV.248, p.10), these bombers still exist in reserve and could still be used. Furthermore, we should like to ask what has happened to all the T-16 bomber aircraft of the Soviet Union, which were to be the counterpart of the B-47 in the mutual "bonfire". Presumably they are still in service, potentially able to drop an enormous megatonnage of nuclear bombs.

Also, as the United States representative pointed out (ibid.), these nuclear weapon carriers, if not destroyed, might find their way into the hands of some new aspirant to the so-called nuclear club. As for the argument of the representative of the Soviet Union that the B-47s have been replaced by more modern weapons, he seems to wish to ignore that the bomber "bonfire" offer was coupled with the potentially more important proposition to stop the production and development of the most powerful nuclear weapon vehicles.

If the Soviet Union had accepted those proposals when they were made two years ago, or even shown any interest in them, perhaps all the new weapons of which the representative of the Soviet Union was complaining in his last statement would never have been constructed. We urge, most earnestly, that the Soviet Union authorities should re-think their "all-or-nothing" approach to disarmament, especially in the field of nuclear weapon vehicles — an approach not in harmony with world realities.

In listening to the Soviet Union representative expound the Soviet attitude in this matter, a story occurred to me, and I hope it will not be thought out of keeping with the usual solemnity of our proceedings if I tell it now. A passionate young man was walking in the mountains with his beloved. He exclaimed to her, "For love of you I would throw myself over this cliff". She replied, "Oh no, I

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wouldn't want you to do that, but in that shop we passed on the way up here there was a very nice ring for \$50; perhaps you would give me that to show me your love." And the young man immediately answered, "Certainly not; such a trivial gesture would be quite inappropriate."

The Canadian delegation, which is always optimistic, was somewhat encouraged by the concluding section of the Soviet Union representative's speech on 15 March, when he stressed the flexibility of his delegation's approach to these negotiations and said:

"... the Soviet Union is prepared to agree to any realistic approach to the order of further work on co-ordinating a programme of general and complete disarmament." (ENDC/PV.248, p.25)

We think that the idea of examining the last stage proposed for general and complete disarmament -- an idea originally advanced by the Swedish delegation (ENDC/PV.202, p.10) -- should be seriously considered. It has many possibilities. I think, however, that all of us will agree that, unless a new start is made, a new approach is tried, towards the problem of reduction and eventual elimination of nuclear weapons and their vehicles, we shall remain in the impasse of the last few years on the subject of general and complete disarmament. We earnestly request the Soviet Union delegation to reflect on these matters and, to use the phrase it sometimes uses, "to draw the necessary conclusions".

Mr. CAVALLETTI (Italy) (translation from French): I should first like to associate myself with the congratulations which the representative of Canada has just extened to the delegations of the United States and the Soviet Union on the splendid results achieved by their countries in the exploration of space. I believe that what has been accomplished today by United States science represents a new and very important step forward in the peaceful conquest of space, and we are delighted to acknowledge the audacity and success of the United States cosmonauts.

I think that after the useful and detailed statement which the representative of Canada has just made, and after the equally useful statement of the United States representative at our last meeting, the Western position on general and complete disarmament emerges very clearly and does not require any further explanation.

(Mr. Cavallotti, Italy)

However, I have felt it my duty to reaffirm briefly today Italy's desire to make progress in the field of general and complete disarmament, and our firm intention to maintain this aim as one of this Committee's fundamental tasks. For this reason my delegation regarded as very appropriate the decision to devote some meetings of the Committee to the discussion of the problem of general and complete disarmament.

We regard this debate as useful from the point of view both of giving effect to resolution 2031 (XX) (ENDC/161), adopted at the last session of the General Assembly, and of recalling the basic task before our Conference. In renewing the instructions given to the Eighteen-Nation Committee "to continue its efforts towards making substantial progress in reaching agreement on the question of general and complete disarmament ...", the General Assembly wished not only to reaffirm solemnly one of the primary aims of the United Nations -- the institution of a peaceful world -- but also to make it clear which body, without prejudice to the world disarmament conference, is still competent to conduct concrete negotiations on total disarmament. That is a fresh expression of confidence in our Committee, and at the same time a reaffirmation of a necessary continuity both in the efforts which must be made until our work is fully accomplished and in the principles on which that work is based.

How shall we respond to these appeals by the General Assembly?

As the number of meetings devoted to general and complete disarmament is limited at this stage of our work, the contribution which we can make should be focussed on essentials -- that is, on reaffirming the intention of all to pursue our task and deciding to give special attention in future to all realistic measures which could lead more rapidly to total disarmament.

Thus, even in the context of general disarmament, account must be taken of the close relationship which exists between the partial and progressive approach and the wider and more general approach. Our aim remains the elimination of all arms; but, within that framework and with that end in view, we must evaluate all the proposals, whether they be general or, more realistically, partial. The need for realistic and progressive methods can never be emphasized too much. If such methods, which the Western delegations have always advocated, had been adopted by the Committee right from the beginning of its work, substantial progress would already have been made on the road to disarmament.

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Of course, a comprehensive programme is necessary. Without a complete, logical and coherent programme we should run the risk of going astray. It is precisely for this purpose, in order that we may advance along the path of logic and coherence, that my delegation wishes to confirm once again the validity of the principles indicated by the Western delegations: respect for an appropriate balance in the elimination of weapons, and the establishment of reasonable guarantees in carrying out the measures agreed upon. These principles, which the United Nations has adopted, require us to bear constantly in mind the political and geographical realities in which we live and which are the point of departure for our work. They are realities which we must improve and shape progressively for our own purposes, avoiding any abrupt imbalance which would endanger stability and peace.

Unfortunately, in the history of our negotiations it has to be noted that some delegations, while formally subscribing to the principles which I have just stated, interpret them in their own way and to their sole advantage. For example, the almost total elimination of a single category of weapons proposed by the Eastern delegations does not take into account either the concrete and practical possibilities or the relationship of nuclear and conventional forces in the world, and particularly on the European continent. It is true that the Soviet delegation has given the impression of grasping, at least partially, the justification for the Western arguments; but it still seems to oppose a broad and comprehensive political and technical examination of all ideas and proposals without exception -- including, of course, those of the Western delegations -- in the search for a realistic rapprochement of the divergent points of view. It is only through such a joint study that we shall be able to progress towards an agreement.

Despite the brevity of our discussion, it seems to me that it is possible to draw some conclusions from it. They are, in our opinion, as follows:

First, nuclear disarmament, without prejudice of course to conventional disarmament, must retain priority in our work, especially as regards the quickest possible reduction of nuclear weapon delivery vehicles to an agreed level which is balanced, controlled and as low as possible.

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Secondly, within the framework of the progressive measures necessary for general and complete disarmament, the freeze in the production of strategic weapons is not only a realistic but also an indispensable measure without which it would be difficult to imagine progress towards our other goals.

Thirdly, the physical destruction of certain quantities of armaments would be a very useful beginning to the process of general and complete disarmament, because the application of this measure, while bringing about an appreciable reduction of stockpiles and arsenals, would also have the advantage of providing a practical test of the methods to adopt for further reductions of armaments.

I hope that this Committee, when it resumes its work on general and complete disarmament, will bear in mind these comments and conclusions which, though provisional, may prove useful and effective in our subsequent work.

Mr. DUMITRESCU (Romania) (translation from French): The Romanian delegation wishes to express its deep gratitude to you, Mr. Chairman, to all the members of the Committee and to the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, as well as to all those who have unanimously agreed to the inconvenience entailed by the change in the programme of today's meeting, in view of the ceremony in commemoration of Nicholas Titulescu.

In reiterating its feelings of gratitude, the Romanian delegation wishes to express its special appreciation of this gesture by the Committee as a tribute to the memory of a man whose voice in support of international security and peaceful co-operation between the peoples resounded so vigorously in this very room, a man who was a great Romanian diplomat and patriot, an illustrious international personality, Nicholas Titulescu.

The CHAIRMAN (Poland): I am sure that I express the feelings of all the delegations here when I extend congratulations to the delegations of the United States and the Soviet Union on the latest accomplishments of Soviet and United States science and technology in the conquest of space.

Mr. FISHER (United States of America): Mr. Chairman, I should like to express my appreciation for your observations and to join in the congratulations extended to the Soviet Union.

Mr. TSARAPKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translation from Russian): I should like to join the United States representative in expressing thanks for the words of congratulations that have been spoken here; and I should like to associate myself with those who have congratulated the United States.

The Conference decided to issue the following communique:

"The Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament today held its 249th plenary meeting in the Palais des Nations, Geneva, under the chairmanship of H.E. Mr. Mieczyslaw Blusztajn, representative of Poland.

"Statements were made by the representatives of Canada, Italy, Romania, the United States and the Soviet Union.

"The next meeting of the Conference will be held on Tuesday, 22 March 1966, at 10.30 a.m."

The meeting rose at 10.50 a.m.

